

SN. 10/670,158

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. KIOI:038

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 remain pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration. Claims 1-3 have been amended to improve their form by globally correcting the usage "input," and adding "wherein" at the beginning of the last paragraph of claim 3. No new matter has been introduced.

Allowable Claims

Claims 2 and 3 have been allowed. Applicants submit that claims 4-14 ultimately depending from allowed claims 2 and 3 are also allowable. Presently, as applicants believe that claim 1 is also allowable, claims 4, 6, and 7 have been maintained as depending from claim 1, 2, or 3.

Art Rejection

Claims 1 and 4-14 (depending from claim 1) were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Watanabe (USP 6,161,427). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, as e Watanabe does not disclose at least the claimed rapid deceleration determining unit.

Claim 1 calls for a rotation sensor that generates a vehicle speed pulse signal in synchronism with the vehicle speed, an elapsed time measuring unit that measures **an elapsed time from the time the vehicle speed pulse signal is input**, a vehicle speed calculating unit that calculates the vehicle speed from the interval of the vehicle speed pulse signal, a vehicle speed memory unit that stores the determined vehicle speed at a prior predetermined time, a deceleration pulse interval calculating unit that calculates a pulse interval corresponding to a predetermined deceleration relative to the determined vehicle speed at the prior predetermined time stored by the vehicle speed memory unit, and a rapid deceleration determining unit that determines rapid deceleration of the vehicle by **comparing the measured elapsed time with the pulse interval calculated by the deceleration pulse interval calculating unit**. [Emphasis added]. When the elapsed time is longer than the calculated pulse interval, the rapid deceleration determining unit determines that the vehicle has rapidly decelerated.

According to claim 1, as the deceleration determining unit compares the elapsed time from the vehicle speed pulse signal input with the calculated decelerating pulse interval, it does not need to wait for the next pulse signal to determine whether the vehicle is rapidly decelerating. Note that the deceleration pulse interval calculating unit calculates the deceleration pulse interval corresponding to a predetermined deceleration relative to the determined vehicle speed at the prior predetermined time. As a result, even when the vehicle